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CITY OF TORONTO PLANNING BOARD

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HISTORY OF PLANNING ORGANIZATION IN TORONTO

SCOPE OF REPORT

This report outlines the development of the planning movement in Toronto, with emphasis on the history of planning agencies since 1897, and particularly the City of Toronto Planning Board after its establishment in the mid-twentieth century. Wherever possible a note is made of the legislation providing for the establishment of the various planning authorities. A complete list of references is given at the end of the report. *

PLANNING AGENCIES IN TORONTO

The history of planning agencies in Toronto began in the year 1897. The span of existence of these organizations is shown diagrammatically on the time-chart, figure 1.

1897: The Civic Guild; The Toronto Guild of Civic Art

May 21, 1897, the Civic Guild was organized as the Toronto Guild of Civic Art, for the improvement and beautifying of Toronto.¹ For some years the Guild occupied itself mainly with plans for mural decoration of the City Hall² and Parliament Buildings.

1. The City of Toronto incorporated, 1824.

2. City Hall built 1899.

*This report was prepared by Rosalyn Berger, B.A., staff Librarian.

1900: By 1900, the interest in the Guild work dwindled; (in 1900 there were eleven paid members). However, shortly before 1900, the movement for better City Planning which had been agitated in many European and American cities took root in Toronto in the Architectural Eighteen Club.

(now the Toronto Society of Architects - (1909)). At a meeting called in May of 1901, at which various organizations were represented, the Guild was prevailed upon actively to undertake city planning³.

1908: The Guild, in 1908, had a Membership of nearly four hundred, and was by this time the formative and directing influence in securing better planning and beautification of the City.⁴

1909: The directing body of the Guild of 1909 included five officers, a Committee of seven and a Plan Committee of sixteen. The Guild continued to exist until 1930.⁵

1909: Civic Improvement Committee

In response to a request by the Civic Guild that a comprehensive plan for the improvement and development of the City be prepared, a Civic Improvement Committee was created by City Council in February, 1909. Since no money was provided, the Committee had to content itself with gathering available information.

3. As a matter of interest, the first plan of the site of Toronto, then the town of York, was made in 1793 and extended in subsequent years.

4. In 1908, there was also in existence an Island Committee, which was composed of six Aldermen, one Controller, an Advisory Committee of five, two members representing the Island Association, and the Secretary at the City Clerk's office. The Advisory Committee included the City Engineer, City Treasurer, Medical Health Officer, Park Commissioner and an Assessment Department representative.

This Committee continued to function until 1912. (The number of Aldermen varied each year).

5. Only three reports issued by the Civic Guild, dated 1909, 1917, and 1930 could be found. These were the only source of information for this report concerning the Guild, and the end date of 1930 given above for the Guild is, therefore, an approximate and not a certain end date.

1910: The Board of Control approved a recommendation of the Committee of 1909 for the continuance of this Committee with a sufficient grant. The Board proposed to Council an appropriation "not to exceed \$2,000". The Civic Improvement Committee of 1910 included three Controllers and three Aldermen, who were appointed to act in conjunction with a committee of ten citizens appointed by His Excellency the Mayor. This group was to continue the work of the joint Committee appointed in 1909 to consider and report upon the carrying out of a comprehensive plan for beautifying the City.


1911: A Civic Improvement Committee was appointed to continue the work of the joint Committee of 1910. This 1911 Civic Improvement Committee included the Mayor, a group of twelve citizens, three Controllers and seven Aldermen. In this year of 1911 four sub-committees were formed:

- (a) Plan Committee
- (b) Legislation Committee
- (c) Finance Committee
- (d) Statistics Committee

1912: Assessment Department, City Surveyor's Office

In 1912, the City Surveyor's Office⁶ was made responsible for the City's operations in the planning field.

6. The first Municipal Handbook, 1911, records an already existing Department of Assessment, Survey Branch. An Charles Harrison City Surveyor. In 1911, T.D. Lelley had been City Surveyor for the Survey Branch, Department of Assessment.



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1928: The Advisory City Planning Commission

The Advisory City Planning Commission, a body of eight, consisting of seven Commissioners one of whom was the Mayor, and a General Director, was appointed by Council May 17, 1928. This Commission functioned during the years 1928-1930.⁷

1930: Department of City Planning and Surveying

The Department was created by the separation of the Surveying Branch from the Assessment Department in 1930 (following the preparation by a Committee of the Heads of Departments of a General Plan of highway improvements). The responsibility for the City's operations under the Planning and Development Act was at this time transferred from the City Surveyor's office, where it had been since 1912, to this newly created Department of City Planning and Surveying. The Department continued to function until 1954 (inclusive), performing the interlocking services of planning, surveying and traffic engineering.

1940: Independent Committee on Zoning

This Committee functioned during the years 1940-1941. Serving on this Committee as secretary and also in an advisory capacity was T.D. LeMay, Commissioner of City Planning.

7. 1930 is the last year for which a report of this commission could be found; hence 1930 is an approximate final date.

1942: Toronto City Planning Board

The urgent need for a postwar program brought about the enactment of By-law No. 15761 by the Council of the City of Toronto on June 1, 1942, to provide for the establishment of a City Planning Board and define its duties and powers. The Board was to prepare a comprehensive plan for the City and its suburbs that would provide a pattern for City growth for the next thirty years. The Board, a Committee of Council, was to advise the Council on how best to bring about a sound and satisfactory development of the City and to ensure that Toronto would possess both a high standard of civic design and organizational efficiency.

The Toronto City Planning Board of 1942 consisted of eight members appointed by the City Council; six were citizens holding three-year⁸ terms, two retiring each year; the City Planning Commissioner was a member ex officio; one member of the Council was elected annually to the Board. In addition, the Government of the Province of Ontario was invited to appoint and did appoint two of its officers to assist the Board and act as liaison between it, the Province and the municipalities adjacent to Toronto. In order to facilitate its studies, the Board appointed an Advisory Technical Committee consisting of five members technically experienced in various aspects of city planning. Also, a Civic Officials Committee consisting of heads of certain city departments and commissions was set up for the purpose of making their knowledge of city problems and administration available to the Board.

8. The six citizen members were appointed by the City Council, for a period of three years, two retiring each year. However, in order to have continuity, the original appointments of these six were made two for one year, two for two years and two for three years.

1943: Following the receipt of an appropriation in 1943, the City of Toronto Planning Board organized a planning staff and office at the Art Gallery of Toronto.

The 1943 City Planning Board consisted of seven members appointed by the City Council - one, annually, from the members of Council and the remainder for a period of three years. In order to have continuity the original appointments had been made two for one year, two for two years, and two for three years. The membership of seven men included: the president of the Goodyear Tire and Rubber Co. Ltd., acting as chairman of the Planning Board, a professor of architectural design at the University of Toronto, the chairman of the Toronto Transportation Commission, a representative from the Toronto and District Labour Council, the general manager of the Toronto Board of Trade, an Alderman of the Toronto City Council, and the Commissioner of City Planning. The latter was Tracy D. LeMay.⁹

In December of this year, the first stage of the Master Plan for the City of Toronto and its Suburbs was submitted to the City Council. This plan was intended to govern the future growth and development of the City during the subsequent thirty years.

As in 1942, the Government of the Province of Ontario was invited to appoint and did appoint three Provincial Government representatives to the City Planning Board of 1943. These were: the Deputy Minister of the Department of Highways, the Deputy Minister of the Department of Municipal Affairs and Martin Baldwin, the Executive Secretary.

9. An eighth member, president of 1943, resigned in January 1943.

Again, as in 1942, an Advisory Technical Committee was appointed by the Board and included one architect, one landscape architect, one city planning consultant, and two consulting engineers, one of whom acted as Convener.

1943: Toronto Reconstruction Council

In January, 1943, a resolution was passed by City Council appointing a Special Committee to study post-war programmes, its membership to consist of representatives of various civic organizations in Toronto.

On December 14, 1943, By-law No. 16051 was enacted by the City Council, providing that the Special Committee be known thereafter as the Toronto Reconstruction Council.

In February, 1948, the name of the Toronto Reconstruction Council was changed to the Civic Advisory Council of Toronto.

This Committee was to act in an advisory capacity to the City Council on matters pertaining to post-war planning for the City of Toronto.

The personnel of the Toronto Reconstruction Council, five of whom were officers, was composed of representatives from various community organizations. Two Controllers were appointed as representatives of the Board of Control. The Toronto Reconstruction Council was empowered, also, to appoint other individuals who it considered would contribute to the work of the Council. The activities of the Council were largely carried on through the Executive and Advisory Committees. The Chairman of the Advisory Committees with the Executive Officers comprised the Executive Committee.

1944: The City Planning Board of 1944 was a body of sixteen men: eight Members, four Provincial Government representatives and an Advisory Technical Committee of five.¹⁰

The Membership included the same seven members of the 1943 City Planning Board and one additional member, J.P. Maher. T.D. LeMay, Commissioner of City Planning, was one of the eight, a member ex officio. The Provincial Government Representatives included the three representatives on the 1943 Board and in addition A.E.K. Bunnell who held the position of director.

The Advisory Technical Committee appointed by the Board included one architect who acted as Convener, one landscape architect, one town planning consultant and one executive engineer. These four men had all been on the Advisory Technical Committee of 1943. There was also another member, who had not been on the 1943 Advisory Technical Committee. This was A.E.K. Bunnell who, as was previously noted, was also a provincial government representative and Director of the Board.

1944: Department of Planning and Development, Province of Ontario.

The Department of Planning and Development Act, 1944, created a department of public service known as the Department of Planning and Development, over which the Minister of Planning and Development was to preside and have charge. This new Department was to function as a

10. Sixteen men and not seventeen, since A.E.K. Bunnell was both a Provincial Government representative and also a member of the Advisory Technical Committee.

co-ordinating unit between departments of the provincial government, between municipalities, and between municipalities and the government in matters relating to planning and development.

1945: In accordance with By-law No. 15761, the City Planning Board, originally appointed in 1942, presented to the City Council a comprehensive master plan for the City and its suburbs, a plan that would provide a pattern for city growth for the next thirty years. This plan was not entirely satisfactory to Council, and in 1945 a new Board was appointed on the lines of legislation then being sought to place planning on a permanent and effective basis. This was the sequence of events in 1945:

The members of the Toronto City Planning Board¹¹ appointed in January, 1945, in accordance with the provisions of By-law No. 15761 tendered their resignations early in the year in order to clear the way for the appointment of a permanent City Planning Board pursuant to the provisions of a City of Toronto Bill which it was anticipated would be passed by the Ontario Legislature at the then current session. The unexpected dissolution of the House before the Bill was passed left the City without a Planning Board. Therefore, in July, 1945, a temporary Board consisting of five was appointed by Council to carry on pending action on the Bill at the next regular session of the Legislature. Included in the five on this temporary Board were Mr. J.P. Mather, who acted as Chairman, and His Worship the Mayor. The Commissioner of City Planning, Tracy D. Leffer, acted as Executive Director and Secretary. The Department of City Planning and Surveying provided technical assistance for this temporary Board, which was known as the Advisory Planning Board.

11. All but one member of the 1945 Planning Board were on the 1942 Board. This member was Mr. J.P. Mather. The Mayor, who resigned as Alderman in 1944, was replaced.

1946: Advisory Planning Board (cont'd.)

The Advisory Planning Board of July, 1945, functioned until September 1946. Then, in September, 1946, the City Council appointed the City of Toronto Planning Board, in accordance with the provisions of the Planning Act of 1946.

The City of Toronto Planning Board

The City of Toronto Planning Board, which took the place of the Advisory Planning Board, was a corporate body whose members were to hold office for three years, one-third retiring each year. Reappointed to the 1946 Board were the five members of the Advisory Planning Board with two additions. Included in the membership of seven were Mr. Maher, Chairman, and His Worship the Mayor, Vice-Chairman and a member ex officio. Planning Director and Secretary was Tracy D. LeMay.

Toronto and Suburban Planning Board

The Toronto and Suburban Planning Board was a body corporate appointed by the City Council in September, 1946, in accordance with the provisions of The Planning Act, 1946. Its jurisdiction, as defined by the Minister of Planning and Development, covered a number of adjacent municipalities.¹² The original nine members of this Board were to hold office for three years, one-third retiring each year. Of the nine members, five represented the City and four represented the other twelve municipalities.

12. The jurisdiction of the Toronto and Suburban Planning Board covered the Townships of York, North York, East York, Scarborough and Etobicoke, the Towns of Leaside, Mimico, Weston and New Toronto, the Villages of Long Branch, Forest Hill and Swansea, and the City of Toronto.

W.W. Gardhouse was Treasurer; Tracy D. LeMay was Planning Director and Secretary.

The Toronto and Suburban Planning Board functioned in 1946 and 1947.

Advisory Planning Committee

In order to maintain close contact with all the municipalities comprised in the Planning Area, the County Council appointed an Advisory Planning Committee consisting of one representative of the Council of each Suburban Municipality. The Toronto and Suburban Planning Board was required to consult the Committee on all matters of general policy affecting the Planning Area. This Committee functioned in conjunction with the Toronto and Suburban Planning Board during the two years of this Board's existence, the years 1946 and 1947.

1947: In 1947 the City of Toronto Planning Board showed no change from the Board of 1946.

Community Counsellor and the Community Council Committee of the Civic Advisory Council (CAC).

The City Council requested and authorized the CAC (known as the Toronto Reconstruction Council until 1948) to appoint and have supervision over a Community Counsellor for the City of Toronto. The latter was to act as a technical counsellor or consultant to the community councils themselves. The Community Counsellor took office on September, 18, 1947, for an experimental period of twelve months, working under the Community Council Committee of fifteen of the CAC.¹³

13. No information on the address name under this arrangement was readily available.

1948: Except for the new Mayor, the City of Toronto Planning Board of 1948 showed no change from the 1947 Board.

In February, 1948, the name of the committee known since December, 1943, as the Toronto Reconstruction Council, was changed to the Civic Advisory Council of Toronto. The latter functioned during the years 1948-1952 inclusive.

Toronto and York Planning Board

In 1948, the Toronto and York Planning Board superseded the Toronto and Suburban Planning Board. Its jurisdiction, as defined by the Minister of Planning and Development, covered the City of Toronto and the County of York. The original Board was a corporate body of nine members¹⁴, four of whom were appointed by the County and five by the City; members were to hold office for three years, one-third retiring each year. There were two officers: W.W. Gardhouse, Treasurer, and Tracy D. LeMay, Planning Director and Secretary.

The Toronto and York Planning Board functioned until September 1, 1953, when it was dissolved.

As in the case of the Toronto and Suburban Planning Board, in order that close contact might be maintained with all the municipalities in the Planning Area¹⁵ under the jurisdiction of the Toronto and York Planning

14. In all years, but 1951, the Toronto and York Planning Board had a membership of nine. In the one exceptional year, 1951, there were only six members on this Board, five appointed by City Council on nomination of the Board of Control and F.G. Gardiner, K.C.

15. Planning Area: City of Toronto and the County of York.

Board, the County Council appointed each year an Advisory Planning Committee consisting of one representative of the Council of each suburban municipality. The Toronto and York Planning Board was required to consult this committee on all matters of general policy affecting the Planning Area.

1949: The City of Toronto Planning Board - As in 1948, the Board had a membership of seven; six members appointed by Council for a three-year term plus His Worship the Mayor, Vice-Chairman, and a member ex officio. Of the six members, five had been on the 1948 Board. A member of the Board of Control was appointed by Council to act as substitute for the Mayor in his absence. Tracy D. LeMay was Planning Director and Secretary-Treasurer.

During this year the Board issued an Official Plan for the City of Toronto.

1950: The City of Toronto Planning Board of 1950 showed no change from the 1949 Board.

1951: The 1951 City of Toronto Planning Board, unlike the 1949 and 1950 Boards which had a membership of seven, had a membership of only six; all six members had been on the 1949 and 1950 Board.¹⁶ The Mayor was a member

16. In accordance with the Planning Act, the planning board must consist of the head of the council of the designated municipality as a member ex officio, and four, six or eight members who are not employees of a municipality or of a local board. In the records, however, the names of only five members and of the Mayor, a member ex officio, are given for the City of Toronto Planning Board of 1951.

ex officio; a member of the Board of Control was appointed as substitute for the Mayor in His absence.

1952: The City of Toronto Planning Board of 1952 showed two changes from the Board of 1951: a new Mayor was vice-chairman and a member ex officio, and there was one additional member on the Board, making a total of seven.

Again, in 1952 a Controller was appointed by Council to act as substitute for the Mayor in his absence. Tracy D. LeMay was still Planning Director and Secretary-Treasurer.

1953: Metropolitan Toronto Planning Board

The year 1953 saw the formation of Metropolitan Toronto and the Metropolitan Toronto Planning Board. The latter was charged with the formulation of an Official Plan for the Metropolitan Toronto Planning Area,¹⁷ subject to approval by the Metropolitan Council and the Minister of Planning and Development. The plan was to deal with land uses, transportation and transit, sanitation, green belts and park areas.

The original Board was composed of nine members appointed by the Metropolitan Council on staggered three-year terms, two members

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17. The Metropolitan Planning Area as defined by the Minister of Planning and Development on September 1, 1953, covers a total of 740 square miles. The structural parts of this planning area are:
1. The City
 2. The inner suburban ring, or the developed adjoining municipalities.
 3. The outer suburban ring with the Townships of Etobicoke, North York, Scarborough.
 4. The fringe ring, beyond Metropolitan Toronto, containing the Townships of Toronto, Toronto Gore, Vaughan, Markham, Pickering, and including the smaller communities and villages within those townships.

not for home in all at once

appointed by the Metropolitan Board of Education and the following ex officio members: the Chairman of the Metropolitan Council, the Chairman of the Metropolitan Parks and Planning Committee and the Mayor of the City of Toronto. In 1958 the membership of the Metropolitan Planning Board was increased to twenty-three; thirteen of the members were appointed by the Metropolitan Council on staggered three-year terms, two were appointed by the Metropolitan Board of Education, and eight were to serve ex officio. Of the thirteen members appointed by the Metropolitan Council, nine represented the Metropolitan Area, and four represented the adjacent municipalities within the Planning Area, the Eastern, North-Eastern, North-Western, and Western sections. The following were members ex officio: the Chairman of the Municipality of Metropolitan Toronto; the Mayor of the City of Toronto; a suburban representative from the Metropolitan Council; the Chairmen of the Committee of Welfare and Housing, Roads and Traffic, Parks and Recreation, and Works, of the Council of Metropolitan Toronto; the Chairman of the Toronto Transit Commission. The Mayor of the City of Toronto and the suburban representative could appoint a substitute with the concurrence of the Metropolitan Council. This Board is responsible to the Council of Metropolitan Toronto.

The 1953 City of Toronto Planning Board membership showed no change from that of 1952.

With the formation of Metropolitan Toronto the planning and development responsibilities of the City, and other local municipalities, were somewhat altered and the duties of the City of Toronto Planning Board

Good

affected accordingly. The Metropolitan Planning Board was given the responsibility for the integration of transportation, utilities and services in general and also of the distribution of residential, industrial, commercial, recreational and other land uses throughout the Metropolitan Planning Area as a whole. The City of Toronto Planning Board and other planning boards within the metropolitan area were to work within this general framework.¹⁸ However, the responsibility of the City of Toronto Planning Board remained essentially that of advising the Council of the City of Toronto on how best to bring about a sound and satisfactory development of the City and ensure that Toronto would be a fine city of the future.

In 1953, the Planning Director of both the City and the Toronto and York Planning Boards, Tracy D. leMay, was also head of the Department of City Planning and Surveying. This served to bring about technical coordination between the various Boards. With the formation of Metropolitan Toronto, the Toronto and York Planning Board was dissolved and the Metropolitan Toronto Planning Board established. Although Mr. leMay continued to act in a dual capacity to the new Boards for some months, his illness and ultimate retirement brought an end to this link between the Boards at the staff level.

18. Although existing subsidiary planning boards in the metropolitan area were to work within this new general framework, no change was made in their status or in the power of any local municipality to seek definition as a subsidiary planning area. Planning boards in area municipalities retained their right to formulate a local official plan. The formation of the Metropolitan Planning Board on September 1, 1953, brought about the simultaneous dissolution of the Toronto and York Planning Board which had had jurisdiction over the whole county of York.

1954: The City of Toronto Planning Board of 1954, like the 1953 Board, had a membership of seven; in both years, one of the seven members was the Mayor, a member ex officio. This was the last year that Trace D. LeMay was Planning Director and Secretary-Treasurer, this post being taken towards the end of the year by M.B.M. Lawson after an inter-regnum of several months.

1955: The City of Toronto Planning Board of 1955, except for the new Mayor, member ex officio, showed no change from the Board of 1954. As in previous years, a member of the Board of Control was appointed by Council to act as a substitute for the Mayor in His absence.

January 14, 1955, City Council approved of an increased staff and budget for the City Planning Board. In August of that year this was again increased in the light of experience. In October of this year City Council increased the board membership to nine from seven.

1956: The 1956 City of Toronto Planning Board had a membership of nine, all of whom were appointed by City Council on nomination of the Board of Control, only a few of whom had been on the 1955 Board. Controller Cornish was appointed to act as a substitute for the Mayor in His absence, in the place of Controller Balfour.

1957: The City of Toronto Planning Board - all but one member had been on the 1956 Board.

1958: At the beginning of this year Mr. J.P. Maher, who had been a member of every official Board since 1943 and Chairman for many years, resigned.

Membership of the City of Toronto Planning Board early in 1958 then stood as follows, Mr. Maher's membership having been filled by Mr. L.W. Lawson.¹⁹

W.H. Clark, Chairman
Nathan Phillips, Q.C., Mayor, Vice-Chairman
E.R. Lockyer²⁰
Stuart Philpott
C.J. Woolsey
Mrs. E.B. Dustan
Mrs. Mary Temple
G.F. Plummer
Lewis W. Lawson

February 23rd, 1959.

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19. Of the eight members, three - W.H. Clark, G.F. Plummer, and Lewis W. Lawson - were not on the 1957 Board. Controller F.J. Cornish was substitute for the Mayor in his absence. Director and Secretary-Treasurer is M.B.M. Lawson, whose title was changed to Commissioner in 1958.
20. Mr. E.R. Lockyer died during the year and Mr. Harry Kimber was appointed a member of the Planning Board, in his place.

REFERENCES

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- (2) City of Toronto, Annual Estimates and Expenditures
- (3) City of Toronto, Municipal Handbooks, 1905-1958
- (4) City of Toronto Planning Board, Annual Reports, 1943-1954
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- (6) Civic Improvement Committee, Report, 1911
- (7) Community Council Committee of the Civic Advisory Council of Toronto, Report, 1947-1948.
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- (9) Geddes, Sir Patrick, Cities in Evolution
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PLANNING BODIES - TORONTO

